

This bill includes \$4.6 billion to provide additional help to law enforcement so they can deal with the tremendous challenges they are currently facing, and for which there is no funding.

How about transportation security? This provides for \$3.2 billion to ensure that there is protection, given the tremendous vulnerability that there is in our infrastructure right now. Is that the part they are opposed to? Would they oppose transportation security?

Finally, providing some help to our mail and our Federal computer systems? We provide for Federal facilities to ensure that we can better screen the mail. No one is more sensitive to screening mail right now than I am. But there is an array of very specific investments in homeland security to protect our mail and to make our computer systems more efficient. We have some of the most archaic computer systems, in many of our Federal agencies, that you can find in the country. We have to update them if we are serious about homeland security. Is that the part they are opposed to?

Which part of this do they not like? That is a really serious question.

I will be happy to yield to the Senator from Oklahoma for a question.

Mr. NICKLES. I will try to make it a question. I think the Senator from Pennsylvania is making a good point; I think we are entitled to ask questions. I don't think we are entitled to make statements.

You asked several questions. Which part of this don't we like? If you read Director Ridge's statement, he said "in next year's budget." Some of us do believe in budgets. Some of us do believe we had a deal with President Bush that said \$686 billion on October 5, plus \$40 billion. We have not even finished spending the \$40 billion. Many of the things you suggested might well be in that \$40 billion and are good causes. And "budget" is a key word.

President Bush has said he believes there is ample money in the \$686 billion and the \$40 billion to meet the needs, things that are needed now. The items the Senator listed were not requested by Director Ridge. They might be in next year's budget, and they may have offsets from other spending to pay for those needed items. The budget is a key item. We should have a budget.

We agreed to \$686 billion, and then we added \$40 billion on top of that, and then we did \$15 billion for airline security. We did untold billions in victims' compensation. No one knows how much that will cost. So some of us are saying, wait a minute, let's slow down just a minute on the spending. Let's at least request it be requested by the President.

Again, I compliment my colleague. You defended your President very well—President Clinton. Some of us want to defend President Bush, trying to make sure we do not go too far, too fast on spending.

Again, many of those items you have mentioned may well be in the second \$20 billion that we have yet to allocate and appropriate. So that is part of the reason some of us are saying let's be reasonable; let's have a stimulus package that still can go for stimulus. Most of the stimulus package—just to make the comment—a lot of us believe should stimulate the economy, not be another excuse for spending.

I wish to answer my colleague's question. You are saying, which one of these items are we against? We are not saying we are against any of those. We think they can be accommodated in the \$40 billion that is yet to be totally allocated by this Congress.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I appreciate the answer of the distinguished Senator from Oklahoma. Let me just say, though, every economist I have talked to has said you can stimulate the economy with spending or with tax cuts. What I find always intriguing, and somewhat amusing, is our Republican colleagues say spending ought to count, tax cuts don't count; we ought to spend as much as we want to with tax cuts, and they don't count; we are going to oppose totally the first dollar of additional homeland security investment; that is, spending; but we are going to propose \$175 billion in tax cuts because that is not spending.

We had an agreement, they said, on \$686 billion in appropriations. Well, we also had an agreement on a tax cut that a lot of people did not like but now have reconciled to because it is law. It passed. It wasn't my part of the agreement, but it passed.

Now the President says: Oh, wait a minute, we want another \$175 billion of additional tax cuts over the \$1.8 trillion we passed last spring because we don't have enough yet. We want to stimulate the economy a little bit more with \$175 billion, drawing down the Treasury, drawing down Medicare, drawing down Social Security, drawing down all the retirement funds to pay for this tax cut, a tax cut that largely doesn't take effect until outyears, years after this one. There is nothing immediate about it at all. I find that very amusing.

We will continue to have this debate. But the whole point is simply this: There are understandable positions that both sides will take in these philosophical debates. I believe there is a right and a wrong way, and they believe there is a right and wrong way. But the only way we are going to find common ground is to meet. Perhaps the most important point in answer directly to the Republican leader's question about what we are going to do with economic stimulus is, I say, let's meet. I propose we meet at 11:30. Let's have a meeting with all of those involved. Let's resolve these differences. They are saying not until you take half of yours off the table. We can't do that.

I think every Republican will understand why.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator for a question.

Mr. DORGAN. I will make it brief, if the majority leader will yield for one question. I know our colleagues are waiting. They certainly have the right to ask a question. I appreciate the majority leader allowing me to do that.

We just heard a discussion about what we can't afford with respect to homeland security, something that the Senator from South Dakota believes very strongly ought to be a part of the stimulus package.

Is it not the case that some of those same folks who say we can't afford to have homeland security spending in the stimulus package believe that we can afford retroactive tax cuts going back to the 1980s to provide up to \$1 billion in checks to one company, for example, for alternative minimum taxes they paid in the last 12–13 years? The same people say we can afford that. That is OK. It is not stimulus, by the way. But we can't afford the investment in homeland security. Isn't it the case that there is a huge contradiction?

Mr. DASCHLE. It is not only a contradiction, it is a sad irony that somehow in the name of economic security we can, according to their approach, pay a company \$1 billion-plus, but we can't find a way to pay for \$1 billion in bioterrorism and food safety. We can't afford that. But we can afford \$1 billion retroactive payments to some of the largest corporations in the country. How ironic. How incredibly misguided that is. Yet that is the debate.

Mr. DORGAN. That totals \$23 billion.

UPON RETURNING FROM THANKSGIVING

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, last week, as I was celebrating Thanksgiving with my family, I was reminded of the history of the holiday. We often forget that Thanksgiving was not always a feast of abundance.

The Pilgrim's first Thanksgiving, in 1621, didn't begin with plates full of turkey and vegetables, but with five small kernels of corn at each setting. For the Pilgrims, it served as a stark reminder of the hardship, struggle, and starvation they had suffered the previous winter.

It wasn't until 1863 that we had our first national Thanksgiving. In the autumn of that year—at the height of the Civil War—Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day not to honor abundance, but to remember "all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers."

And so, to me, this Thanksgiving came closer to the original meaning of the day: a day to remember, in the

midst of hardship, that we have so much to for which to be thankful. A day to remember, in the midst of comfort, the many who are suffering.

In the last 2 weeks, I have been asked by many people and many of my colleagues what the Senate intends to do before the end of the year.

There are a number of things I would like to get done, but I believe that nothing we do here in the Senate is more important than helping those who are suffering, and passing an economic recovery plan.

Last month, we saw the largest jump in the unemployment rate in 21 years.

Yesterday, a panel of economists announced that our Nation has officially entered a recession.

For the more than 7 million Americans who are out of work, this Thanksgiving was a time of uncertainty.

For all Americans, this has been a season of deep concern about threats to our safety.

America needs an economic recovery plan that lifts our economy, secures our Nation, and remembers those who are suffering.

It is time for us to renew our efforts to pass such a plan.

In the weeks following the September 11 attacks, Democrats and Republicans in both the House and the Senate asked the experts: "What are the most effective steps we can take to shore up our economy?"

Here is what they told us: Put money into the hands of low- and middle-income workers; they are the ones who will spend it quickly. Make sure that workers who have lost their jobs receive unemployment benefits. And cut taxes for businesses—but limit the tax cuts to those businesses that actually help create jobs.

They said that any plan to stimulate the economy should help people regain the sense of security they need to shop, travel, and invest.

Finally, they said our plan must be affordable, and temporary.

Based on those conversations, the House and Senate budget committees agreed to four principles that should underpin any economic stimulus measure we pass.

With their principles as our foundation, and those discussions as our guide, we began negotiations on how best to help our economy recover.

Unfortunately, Republican leaders in the House chose to withdraw from that effort.

Instead, they pushed through—on a party line vote—a bill that is not a recovery bill at all, but merely another laundry list of tax cuts—with the lion's share going to profitable businesses and wealthy individuals.

It includes next to nothing for laid-off workers—the very people who most need our help. And, with an exploding price tag, it runs the risk of actually hurting our economy in the long term.

In the Senate, we sought a better approach. Even after Republicans in the House walked away from the negotiations, Senator BAUCUS continued to call for bipartisan meetings on the Senate side. In the end, he and his staff held nearly a dozen of them.

He put together a serious bill that: extends unemployment benefits and health care coverage for unemployed workers; cuts taxes for families who didn't get a rebate as part of the tax cut passed earlier this year; cuts taxes and for businesses that will invest and create jobs; and, with provisions authored by our distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator BYRD, strengthens our homeland security with investments in things like infrastructure security and bioterrorism preparedness.

The Wednesday before Thanksgiving, that bill was killed by a budget point of order—a procedural technicality which said that what we are facing is not an emergency.

Republicans said they opposed our economic recovery plan because the bill contained too much spending.

Democrats feel strongly that homeland security provisions should be a part of any economic recovery package.

These measures not only make important investments to secure our food and water supply, ports, bridges, tunnels, as well as our stockpile of antibiotics and vaccines. They also give people the sense of confidence they need to shop, travel, and invest.

The past couple of weeks have reminded us again about the importance of homeland security. We have seen another anthrax death, this time in Connecticut, and the FBI found an anthrax-tainted letter sent to Senator LEAHY. The President's Director of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge, has indicated that billions in additional funds are needed to make America safer. In fact, it was reported that, in the wake of September 11, Federal agencies have asked the White House for \$127 billion more to recover from that assault and beef up security according to David Broder in Sunday's Washington Post.

Defending against anthrax, making our infrastructure safer, protecting our water supply—these things are not pork. They are necessary goals, and an important part of any stimulus package.

But despite my commitment to the homeland security provisions, I have indicated my willingness to negotiate them separately in the name of reaching an agreement.

That idea was rejected.

We also offered to debate only the economic recovery component, if Republicans would allow us an up or down vote on homeland security as an amendment to the DOD appropriations bill.

That proposal was also rejected. That was 2 weeks ago. And since then, I have heard nothing.

We are at the table, ready to negotiate. It is time for Republicans to get serious about reaching a compromise, and come join us at the negotiating table. This is not time to play politics with our economy and our security.

In the meantime, perhaps our Republican colleagues would find it less objectionable if we consider, individually, the components of our plan on which we are all agreed. I will ask unanimous consent at a later time to bring up just the part of our plan that helps laidoff workers.

Extending unemployment insurance is more than the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. It puts money into the hands of people who are most likely to spend it immediately. As Robert Rubin has said, unemployment insurance is "a near-perfect stimulus."

During the first Bush administration, when we were facing a recession, Democrats and Republicans agreed to extend unemployment insurance four times. I believe we can agree to do the same now.

Everyone in this body has said that they want to help the workers. But the voices of delay always claim they want to help the workers.

If you want to help the workers, you will have an opportunity to do so today.

In the days ahead, we can continue our work to protect America's families from terrorism, and discuss what kinds of tax cuts will be most effective in helping the economy.

But when we talk about helping the hardest hit, we need to realize that the people we are talking about don't have unlimited savings. The holidays are fast approaching, and this delay is a luxury they literally cannot afford.

Our Republican colleagues have a new mantra. They say, "We need paychecks, not unemployment checks."

I think they should talk to some laidoff workers. Yes, they need a paycheck. And like most hard-working Americans, they don't want the Government to do anything for them that they can do for themselves. But right now, many of them need just a little help to make it through one of the most difficult times in their lives.

As we return from Thanksgiving, we have an opportunity to honor the true meaning of the holiday—to remember those left behind and left out, to lift those who are suffering, and to make our Nation—this land for which we are all so thankful—even stronger in the future.

So when people ask me what the Senate intends to do in the next couple of weeks, that is my answer, and that is my goal.